



Candidate Statement for Barbara Williams

I have been involved with Sierra Vista Public Schools on an almost daily basis since we moved to Sierra Vista in 1990. Both of our sons graduated from Buena. At various times I was a parent volunteer, PTO president, substitute teacher, and for 21 years I was a full time teacher at Apache Middle School and Buena High School, retiring in 2014. During that time I also served on site councils, was president of the teachers' association for five years, and worked with committees, task forces, campaigns, and much more. From this experience I am convinced that this is a fine school district, with ethical and competent leadership, dedicated and talented staff, the world's best students, and a community that is largely supportive and appreciative.

However, it would be naïve to say these are not difficult years for public education in Arizona. We have been neglected and abused by our elected officials in Phoenix, and often misrepresented and given conflicting tasks and guidance. I believe that more challenges lie ahead of us and that we must meet those challenges with information, strength, commitment, and courage. The task is too important not to be involved in it. It is time to clarify the issues and take the politics out of the process.

I am running for this office not to "fix" anything, but rather to support and advocate for our students, our staffs, and our schools. In addition to 21 years of successful teaching experience, my qualifications include a master's degree in education with graduate level course work in school finance and law. I have actively worked to keep myself informed about changes in school law and policy throughout the years. I currently teach in Cochise College's Education Department, helping prepare yet another generation of teachers. For the last two and a half decades I have attended school board meetings as often as possible and kept informed of our district's policies, challenges, and changes. I am active in statewide and national education organizations.

I am eager to listen and to learn. I am absolutely convinced that all of us have the same goal in mind, the success and wellbeing of our students. With that common goal, it becomes possible to work together respectfully and to find solutions to the problems that stand in our way. I hope to bring good communication to the process and to help find creative and effective solutions to the issues. I understand the procedures and policies of our District as well as the state of Arizona.

Public education is one of the most solid foundations of our society. I want to serve in order to pay back for the gifts and opportunities that I have received from my own education and from the years that I was a teacher in our district. There is nothing more important than our students.

